

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 7
11201 Renner Blvd., Lenexa, Kansas 66219

Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Nine Tribal Nations

EPA Receives Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's Health Consultation for West Lake Landfill; Report Shows No Public Health Risk for St. Louis

Contact Information: Ben Washburn, 913-551-7364, washburn.ben@epa.gov

Environmental News

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Lenexa, Kan., October 16, 2015) – A health consultation conducted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), a part of the U.S. Health and Human Services, shows that groundwater, air, and soil data do not indicate a health risk to communities surrounding the West Lake Landfill.

EPA Region 7 had asked ATSDR to determine if radiological contamination buried at the West Lake Landfill poses any harm to human health.

“This independent report by some of the nation's premier scientific health experts should reassure the public that there is no offsite risk from contamination at the West Lake landfill,” said Mark Hague, Acting Regional Administrator. “This report confirms previous conclusions by EPA. We will remain focused on protecting public health by completing the investigations required to support a final remedy decision and implement that as quickly as possible.”

ATSDR identified five key findings with recommendations:

- On-site worker safety must continue to be a high priority for EPA as digging at the landfill could release dust containing uranium and thorium decay products and Radon gas on the landfill that might impact health.
- Outdoor Radon concentrations near the landfill are not high enough to harm people's health but seem to be greater than typical background levels. Off-site air sampling results show no migration of contaminants in the area surrounding the landfill.
- Groundwater from the site will not harm people's health. The water flows away from residential areas and is not being used as a public water supply.
- Soil samples show no evidence of contamination along roads leading to the landfill.

EPA agrees with ATSDR's recommendations and will ensure:

- Continued groundwater monitoring, including wells previously sampled on- and off-site.
- Continued protective on-site efforts that prevent off-site migration of contaminants as the agency completes site investigations needed to support a final remedy decision. The final remedy proposal is expected to be released for public comment at the end of 2016.
- Continued air monitoring for radon at the landfill and within one-mile of the landfill.
- Continued to ensure adequate dust control measures are taken during any on-site activities

A copy of ATSDR's health consultation will be available on EPA's West Lake Landfill Superfund Site webpage.

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Learn more about EPA's work at the West Lake Landfill Superfund Site:
http://www.epa.gov/region7/cleanup/west_lake_landfill/index.htm

Learn more about EPA Region 7: <http://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/region7.html>

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